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mass destruction, mainly nuclear weapons, which might appose threat to the U.S. Global strategy.

5. By achieving the above mentioned goals the U.S. further achieved its quest for world hegemony.

Therefore, we can conclude that the overall assessment of U.S policy towards the Arabian Gulf during the past several decades from the end of World War II in 1945 to the 2003 American occupation of Iraq has been influenced by a combination of factors rather than a single dramatic factor. This, in the final analysis, will provide a full and comprehensive understanding of the U.S. policy towards the Arabian Gulf.

interests rather than unchangeable principles. The U.S. is no exception here, and therefore understanding its real policy in the region requires more than a single case study. The most important fact about U.S policy in the Arabian Gulf is that it tends to pursue a number of economic, political, and strategic interests. The mix of these interests has always effected and directed the U.S policy towards the region.

Once the U.S has dropped its non-interventional stance of the past and prepared to use its own military forces to protect its interests in many parts of the world in general and in the Gulf in particular, the U.S policy towards the region has been determined and based on the assumption that whoever threatens the security and stability of the Gulf region would have threatened the U.S. national security interests and will be aggressively rejected by all means necessary.

On the other hand, the U.S primary national goal was to contain the former Soviet influence in the Gulf thereby ensuring the free flow of the region's oil, maintaining a pro-American balance of power in the region, preventing any threats by any regional power to the U.S interests, and to promote stability in the region so that U.S goals can be served. However, the American victory in the 1990-1991 Second Gulf War and the end of the Cold War order had brought a new dimension to the U.S. Gulf strategy, this new strategy may be determined by the following considerations:

1. The use of all means necessary to promote and protect its vital economic interests in the region mainly oil, from being threatened by outside or regional power.
2. To increase cooperation with what so called friendly regimes in the region and to appose by all means those who are not.
3. To ensure long term military presence in the region in order to establish its stated aims of what it meant by the new world order.
4. Using its own military power and the international agencies to prevent any attempt by any state in the region, with exception to Israel, to produce weapons of

Conclusion

The Gulf region remains probably the most important region among all regions of the world for the U.S. This reality is reflected in many statements made by U.S officials since the end of World War II until today. For many reasons, historical, ideological, economical, and political, the U.S has been influenced by the regional and international consequences of the events in the Gulf. In the recent years the nature of U.S–Arabian Gulf relations has been critically influenced by events and crises in the region:

The power vacuum created by the British withdrawal from the region by the early 1970's had forced the U.S. to fill the power vacuum in order to prevent the former Soviet of doing so, and appose a threat to the U.S. interests there, mainly oil, in addition to the balance of power equation.

The 1973 oil embargo used by the Arab producing countries as a political weapon to force the U.S. to change its stance towards the Arab- Israeli conflict lead the U.S. to review its Gulf policy by building up a new strategy including the use of its military forced to ensure the free flow of the regions oil.

The loss of Iran in 1979 and its consequences, the American hostage crisis is another challenge facing the traditional U.S. Gulf policy. The 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran war and its impact on the Gulf security in general and the free flow of the region oil has led the U.S. under the Reagan Administration to drop its stance from a distant observer to farther set its own long run strategy that includes the no-winner war equation, despite its tilt toward Iraq during the war and the Iran contra-affairs. The former Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that puts the Soviet in a close distance from Iran and the Gulf oil which apposed a threat to the U.S. interests in the region, and finally, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 1990 and its consequences and aftermath which have led the U.S. to take matters on its own way to eject Iraq out of Kuwait in the 1990-1991 Second Gulf War.

U.S involvement in the region has been far from smooth. However, the foreign policy of any state is based on real and changing national

achieving predominant control over the geopolitically crucial bridge connecting Europe , Africa, and Asia, and here we refer to the Middle East at large securing access to the Arabian Gulf oil, and securing the existence of Israel and preventing the use of oil in connection to the Arab-Israeli conflict by the oil producing countries in the Gulf.

In fact, the argument over the priorities and intensity of those interests vary from one American Administration to another. The ways that the U.S. policies towards the region have been conducted can be described as follows: from cautious observers, to un-immediate involvement by supporting friendly states in the region like Iran and Saudi Arabia during the Nixon Administration, and to direct involvement as it was during the George W. Bush 1991 U.S. reaction to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and now the American occupation of Iraq.

Finally, an overall assessment of the U.S. policy towards the Arabian Gulf from the end of World War II to the 2003 American occupation of Iraq have in fact been analyzed and evaluated by many scholars and foreign policy analysts that the importance of the Gulf region to the U.S. can be categorized as follows:

1. The strategic location of the Gulf region.
2. Its vital economic importance to the world economy especially to the U.S. and its quest for world hegemony.
3. Its linkage to the traditional Arab-Israeli conflict.
4. And finally, after the end of the Cold War era, the U.S. future Global strategy or what has come to be known as the new world order announced by president George W. Bush after the Second Gulf War in 1991.

It is worth noting here that the overall assessment of the U.S. policy towards the region can not be analyzed without its historical content of the development of U.S. strategic interests in the region. The ways, in which the U.S. conducted its policy, the factors that contributed much to the guideline of its policy, and the outcomes of its policy can be analyzed by the use of multi-factor analogy within its historical content throughout the different stages mentioned by the study.

7. Finally, continue support to what so called friendly regimes and states in the region with the superiority of Israel over all.³⁸

However, the question remains that, what is in the final analysis vital to the U.S. interests and policy towards the Gulf? Is it oil that is so vital to the economic well being of the U.S. and its national security interests? As Alkhateb (1984) has noticed that there is a general agreement among all analysts that the Gulf area will be and continue to be the largest and most important source of energy to the world market, and to the U.S. in particular. Therefore, the Gulf area is in fact a vital strategic area to the U.S. economic and national security interests. This, on the other hand, has lead the U.S. to use all means necessary including the use of military intervention to protect its vital interests from being threatened by external powers, the former Soviet or regional powers such as Iraq before 2003 and now Iran.³⁹

Mageda Abu Jamous (2005) in her book the "The American Strategy in the Arabian Gulf" has stated that the Third World contained 30% of the worlds oil reserves, produce of 46% of the world production, and consumes only 2% of the world consumption, therefore the amount of oil reserve, production, and consumption of the Third World with comparison to the industrial world who produces 28% and consumes 75% of the world oil consumption, explains why the Gulf region is so vital to the U.S., so critical to its national security, that must be kept under control by all means necessary.⁴⁰

In addition to the critical importance of the Gulf oil, the petrodollars investment is another key component to the economic interest of the U.S. The political importance of the Gulf in world politics has also been noticed since the end of World War II until the present time, the United States through different stages has kept the balance of power with the former Soviet in tact to keep the Soviets out of the region. This has been very clear in all the U.S. presidential doctrine from Truman 1947 until the end of the Cold War order in 1991.

However, the argument over policies towards the Gulf, during the period specified in this study is surrounded by the overall Middle East U.S. Cold War policy. As mentioned before, the list of U.S. policy priorities regarding the whole region have been addressed by the policy makers as the limitation and/or preventing the former Soviet from

The combination of a threat of the former Soviet expansion and fears that the West countries might be denied access to the regions oil or be controlled by a hostile regional power has given rise to a number of national security and foreign policy imperatives. Accordingly, the basic geopolitical world views should include:

1. Insure that the rival superpower, the Soviet Union, does not gain supremacy of military power over the U.S. and its NATO allies. So this would explain the Cold War arms race.
2. Preventing the former Soviet from enlarging the traditional extent of its sphere of control, and to keep the Soviet within their borders. So this is why the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been considered a threat to the U.S. interests in the Gulf.
3. Keep the other advanced noncommunist countries within the U.S. sphere of influence. So that the NATO power should be increased under the leadership of the U.S., by maintaining U.S. Naval superiority in the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Indian Ocean, in addition to the Red Sea and the Gulf.
4. After the collapse of the Cold War order and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union in 1991, keep hostile forces including regional ones out of the spots, so that is why the U.S. acted swiftly against Iraq in the Second Gulf War 1991 and the American occupation of Iraq 2003, and now the hostile situation with Iran.
5. Maintain access to foreign sources of raw materials including the oil of the Arabian Gulf.
6. Secure permanent military bases in the region to keep the region under direct control so that the U.S. global strategy and its world hegemony would be advanced.

Air Force after the war, lead to the increasing demand of the Gulf oil by the U.S. to meet the new challenges facing its war capabilities and military industry. Therefore the U.S. expanded its relations with the core states in the region such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, before 1979, and increased its military assistant and commitment to the regions stability and security.³⁶

Actually, there has been a broad consensus among the Americans since World War II on the most important threats facing the U.S. This consensus has been built around the perception that the Soviet Union, could, and might if given the opportunity put the core interests of the U.S. in jeopardy. These new Soviet challenges could pose a threat by expanding its own geopolitical and global sphere of influence by implementing its Marxists-Leninist approaches of overthrowing what they consider as the imperialists capitalists world order.

Stage two of the assessment of the U.S. policy towards the Gulf started in the mid 1970's. A new primary geopolitical concern was added to the pre-occupation with soviet expansion, namely that the U.S. and its allies in Western Europe and Japan might be denied access to crucial foreign sources of energy, particularly Arabian Gulf oil. The new concern was the product of four related developments:

1. The nationalization by Middle Eastern and other third world countries of the holdings of U.S. and European multinational oil corporations with their territories.
2. The formation of the organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) cartel to control the marketing of oil;
3. The use of oil as a political weapon by the Arab members of OPEC during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war when they withheld exports to the U.S. and other countries who deemed to be sympathetic to Israel.
4. The increasing dependency of the U.S. industrial system on imported oil. U.S. economists and military strategists now feared, for the first time that the country's economy could be hobbled and its military power severely degraded by events in the Middle East and the Gulf area, whether or not the Soviets were attempting to manipulate them.³⁷

environment. However, most scholars of international politics and foreign policy analysts found themselves surrounded by the concepts of national interests of the state as a tool of analysis. The U.S., no exception here, all foreign policies are claimed by the policy makers to be in the national interests of the state. According to Seymon Brown (1984), in his effort to determine when the national interest of the state is vital so that the state should be willing to incur great sacrifices even to fight a war, to defend its interests, Seymon has argued that the geopolitical perspective defines the national interest exclusively in terms of power, the power of the U.S. relative to that of other countries. The essence of power to the geo-politician is the ability to control the behavior of, or resist being controlled by others. In the international system, the principle ingredients of power, so defined, are assumed to be military and economic strength. With such efficient military and economic strength, the country should be able to sustain at least its core value; dependant survival in a condition of general material well-being. Insufficient military and economic strength will put the state at the mercy of others.³⁵

It is now wise to elaborate in support of Seymon's argument that power is the essence of the U.S- Gulf Policy, since the end of World War II until the end of the Second Gulf War and its aftermath, namely, the American occupation of Iraq in 2003. Containing the former Soviet influence in the Gulf region, and then confronting any regional power that might occur and threaten U.S. interests such as Iraq before 1991 until 2003, and Iran at this time was the mechanism of the U.S. policy towards the Gulf.

However, the assessment of the U.S. policy towards the Arabian Gulf has been divided into four distinctive stages. The turning point in these stages was between the 1980 Iraq-Iran War and the 1990-1991 Gulf War and its aftermath. Assessment of the U.S. policy towards the Gulf in stage one has always been surrounded by the balance of power between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. The Cold War U.S. policy towards the region was to keep the Soviets out of the region, especially after the discovery of oil. According to Khalel Morad (1980), the critical importance of the Gulf oil to the U.S. has significantly been noticed during and after World War II, the expansion of the U.S. Navy

The Bush Administration policy towards the region was more aggressive and decisive than any other U.S. Administration. Once the United Nation's Security Council Resolution 678 had passed authorizing the use of force to enforce Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991, president Bush drew the line on the sand for the Iraqis and he acted swiftly by ordering the U.S. led forces to start a war against Iraq. The operation Desert Shield now became the operation Desert Storm. 33

Phase Four: From the 1991 Gulf War to the 2003 American Occupation of Iraq

The victory of the U.S.-led coalition over Iraq in 1990-1991 Gulf War was less complete than it might otherwise have been. The former president of Iraq, the late Saddam Hussein managed to retain power over Iraq despite what the war had brought to his country. In fact, with Saddam still in power, after the war, Bush's decision to end the war continued to be questioned. Even in defeat the late Saddam managed to create headaches to the U.S. and its allies in the region since the 1990-1991 Gulf war until the 2003 U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. However, the Clinton Administration remained committed to the U.S. policy in the Middle East in general and the achievement of the United States new policy in the Gulf Region in particular. The American victory over Iraq and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 provided a more confident and relaxed mood to the Clinton Administration and its policy in the region. The U.S. concern for its vital interests in the region combined with gaining control over the region has been significantly improved.³⁴ However, the Bush Administration (the son) views the Gulf as an area of significant importance to the world political stability in general and to the U.S. economic and strategic interest. These views promoted the objective of invading Iraq by the Bush Administration in 2003.

Assessment of the U.S. Policy Towards The Arabian Gulf 1945-2003

There is a great debate among scholars and policy makers about why and how states are acting within their domestic and international

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the early 1980's events, the eight-year long war between Iraq and Iran, and the early 1990's events, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, all were major events that shocked the security and stability of the Gulf region, and in one way or another threaten the U.S. interests. However, the August 2, 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait has created a crisis that would remain at the forefront of international agenda for a long time after. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait evoked a strong response from most of the world, especially the U.S. and its allies both in the west and in the Gulf region. In fact, the Bush Administration acted swiftly. President Bush responded to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait by building together an international coalition authorized by the United Nations Security Council to oppose Iraq while he, at the same time, prepared to go to war against Iraq.

The fact is , Bush was going the extra miles for war. He even shows that he was working with the world leaders to convince Iraqis to withdraw from Kuwait, while he was still saying "Iraq's naked aggression could not stand, Saddam Hussein, said President Bush is an Adolph Hitler whose power would continue to expand if the U.S. did not act." 31 President Bush and his advisors, defense secretary, and his joint chief of staff met on August 3, one day after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and decided to seek Saudi Arabia approval to deploy U.S. troops and heavy equipment in Saudi Arabia claiming that it was just to protect the Saudi from any further aggression by the Iraqis. He described the mission as "wholly defensive" giving the operation the title of Desert Shield. After having approved by the late King Fahad of Saudi Arabia to welcome the Americans to defend the country, President Bush ordered the massive deployment of U.S. troops plus high-tech aircraft and other modern war machines in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf region, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and Turkey. Actually, Bush needs more time to guarantee that his troops and war machines would be capable and ready to move to an offensive stage in order to achieve his already sited aims of having the Iraqi forced out of Kuwait. Therefore, President Bush undoubtedly managed to get the time needed for his operation. Between August 2 and January 15, the president had achieved two necessary goals, one was to gain international support for his mission and the other was the time needed for a full-scale military operation against Iraq. 32

Deployment Force (RDF), and in 1981, increased military assistance to Saudi Arabia by pushing an agreement through the congress to sell five Air Borne Warning and Control System (AWACS) to Saudi Arabia. According to Lester H. Brune, the Reagan Administration developed little-publicized plans to create facilities in Saudi Arabia and pre-position U.S. equipment "over the horizon" in order to react quickly to any Gulf crisis. 28

Phase Three: From 1988 to the 1991 Gulf War

The nature of the Reagan Administration policy towards the Gulf during his 8 years in office was influenced by the fact that at the time the U.S. had no diplomatic relations with neither Iraq nor Iran which made cooperation with either side almost impossible, because of the American hostages in Iran, and the case of Iraq was also hostile. Actually, the case of being neutral in the conflict was not fully followed by the Reagan Administration. In fact, the U.S. policy objectives at the time were first, to insure the free flow of the regions oil, second to seek a balance of power so that neither Iraq nor Iran achieved victory "a no winner war", third to keep the Soviet out of the conflict, and finally, to insure the security of the more friendly regimes in the region. 29

However, a major shift in the Reagan's neutrality policy has been noticed during the Iraq-Iran War. The Reagan Administration increased its commitment to the security of Saudi Arabia and other states in the region such as Kuwait, and strengthening U.S.-Saudi military cooperation. The second shift in the Reagan's neutrality policy was the beginning of the U.S. tilt towards Iraq, in an effort to keep the balance of power and to achieve the no-winner war equation intact. 30

It's quite clear that the Reagan Administration's main objective was in fact the continuation of the standard U.S. policy towards the region. It added new dimensions to the ways U.S. policies have been carried out, with its readiness to use force to protect U.S. interests, and its willingness to support, in all means necessary, states in the region whose aims are compatible with those of the U.S.

As mentioned before, the late 1970's events, the loss of Iran, and the

enable the Soviet Union, at that time, to mount challenges against neighboring Pakistan and Iran and then, western oil sources in the Gulf would be more easily placed under siege.²³

The cold war containment policy has been challenged by these events. However, to meet these challenges, the U.S. under the Carter Administration, began to lay the ground work for the protection of an American Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) to meet future emergency situations in the region.²⁴ Although, eruption of war between South Yemen and North Yemen in 1979 which has been categorized as an act of aggression made by South Yemen as a calculated Cuban-Soviet probe against Yemen Arab Republic who has been supported by Saudi Arabia, were in fact another challenge to the U.S. Gulf policy. These events however, have forced the U.S. to drop its non-interventional stance of the past, and were prepared to use its own military forces to protect its interests in the Gulf.²⁵

Accordingly, the Carter Administration's new policy towards the Gulf started to realize that the new challenges facing the U.S. interests in the region has to be met with a strong and immediate U.S. involvement including the use of military force if necessary. This new policy has been clarified by Carter's Defense Secretary Brown, when he announced that "In the protection of those vital interests including the protection of oil flow from the Middle East, we will take any action that is appropriate including the use of military force." ²⁶

On the other hand, the Carter Administration gave special attention to reinvigorating its special relationships with Saudi-Arabia. Saudi anxieties regarding U.S. policy had increased with the fall of the Shah, the former ruler of Iran in 1979, and the imminent signature of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty under U.S. auspice. In February 1979, Secretary Brown visited Saudi-Arabia and promised a more active U.S. policy in the region. ²⁷

The failure of the Carter Administration to meet the challenges apposed by the loss of Iran, the U.S. hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been considered as major foreign policy campaign issues carried out by Ronald Reagan. However, when he became president, he adopted Carter's plans for a U.S. Rapid

oil, which is vital interest to the U.S., must be fully considered by the policy makers in the U.S.. The connection between the Gulf security, as one of the U.S. objectives in the Middle East at large, and a just and lasting resolution to the Arab-Israeli Conflict came to be recognized both in the Gulf region and the U.S. The Arab-Gulf States action lead by Saudi Arabia in 1973 using the oil as a political weapon by stopping shipment of oil to the West and the U.S. was a stab in the back for the Nixon twin-pillar policy, and its basic goals, the free flow of the region oil. The late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia in 1973 fully recognized that the U.S. had a unique ability to play a more affective role in the Middle East problem by increasing pressure on Israel to change its policy regarding the Arab's occupied territories. The action taken by the Gulf Arab States, despite the lack of their military power, became the principal financial support for the Arab States more directly involved in the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Accordingly, the Ford Administration became more aware that the U.S. interests in the region will not be served by ignoring the fact that if the U.S. has to secure a settlement insuring "Israel's right to exist" which they believed a significant U.S. interest in the region, then it had to seek the cooperation of the, what so called, Pro-Western Arab-Gulf States. 21

The Carter Cold War-Gulf policy marked the beginning of the U.S. increasing awareness toward the region. The Iranian revolution 1979, the U.S. hostage crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were the most critical issues facing the U.S. role in the region. The Iranian revolution led by the late Khumani Religious Shiite leader has shook the regions stability with the fear of the spread of the Iranian Islamic Radical Revolution to the rest of the region which contains a large number of Shiite Muslims in Iraq, and most of the Gulf States. This has been considered by the U.S. and most of the Gulf region as a threat to the stability of the region and to the U.S. interests at large.²² On the other hand, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was also another challenge to the U.S. standard policy in the Gulf. American proponents of the Globalist school, pointing to earlier Soviet support to Marxist regimes in Angola and Ethiopia, argued that the invasion of Afghanistan was yet another installment in a grand Soviet design of imperial expansion. A new Soviet military base in Afghanistan would

Phase Two: 1973 to the 1988 end of Iraq-Iran War

The Nixon Administration policy in the Gulf was very much influenced by the U.S. Cold War policy. The Vietnam War, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the end of the British domain in the Gulf were factors contributing much to the increasing U.S. involvement in the region. Until then, there was no U.S. direct military presence in the region. Instead the Nixon Administration relied on Iran to be the Gulf "police man" as an anti-Soviet regime in the Gulf beside Saudi Arabia. This policy has come to be known as the twin-pillar policy adopted by the Nixon Administration during the United States Cold War Gulf policy. The U.S. policy towards the Gulf under the Nixon Administration was announced by Assistant Secretary of State, for Near Western and South Asian Affairs, Joseph Sisco, who referred to the Gulf as an area in which "we have very significant politico- economic-strategic interests." Sisco defined the United States interests as being; "first, support for indigenous U.S. regional collective security efforts to provide stability and to foster orderly development without outside interference. Second, the peaceful resolution of territorial , and other disputes, among the regional states and the opening up of better channels of communication among them. Third, continued access to Gulf oil supplies at reasonable prices and in sufficient quantities to meet our growing needs and those of our European and Asian friends and allies. Finally, enhancing of our commercial and financial interests."¹⁸

On the other hand, in 1973, James Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near East, African and South Asian Affairs described United States security interests in the Gulf as follows: "first; containment of the Soviet Union military power within its present border. Second; access to the Gulf oil. Finally, continued free movement of U.S. ships and aircraft into and out of the area".¹⁹

The U.S. primary national goal has been to contain the former Soviet influence in the Gulf, thereby ensuring the free flow of oil to Europe and the U.S. and in the Indian Ocean thereby maintaining a Pro-U.S. balance of power in the region.²⁰

When Gerald Ford Became the president of the U.S. he recognized that the linkage between the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Arabian Gulf

Phase One: 1945 to the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

The Cold War era remarked the beginning of the U.S. involvement in the region within the general policy of the containment of the Soviet influence in the whole Middle East. The Truman Administration formally announced the beginning of the U.S. involvement in the Gulf by confirming the U.S. readiness to stand for any Soviet challenges in the region.

In 1957, the Eisenhower Administration provided assistance programs and was ready to protect the region from any aggression especially the Soviets. He asked the congress then for authorizing the use of armed forces if it was necessary to protect the region and its territorial integrity. Eisenhower promoted the establishment of a security agreement known as the Baghdad Pact of 1955 with Britain, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey, and he continued his commitment for the security of the region.¹⁵

The Kennedy Administration views for the Gulf region was part of the U.S. Cold War Middle East strategy. The containment of the former Soviet influence in the region in a time of increasing Cold War tensions between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union remarked the increasing role of the U.S. in the Arabian Gulf. President Kennedy in 1961 sought to play a more active role by creating the (U.S. Strike Command) for operations abroad.¹⁶

The Johnson Administration's readiness to meet the Cold War challenges in the region were controlled by the increasing tensions in the Middle East at large especially the growing power of Israel after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The radical Arab state during that period saw the U.S. policy in the Middle East as an imperialist power which supported Israel and shifted their effort to meet these challenges to the former Soviet Union for military hardware and political supports. The Arab Gulf States were the financial supporters for the Arab front against Israel. This, however, was part of the Cold War U.S. policy in the Gulf in particular and the Middle East in general¹⁷

way, had controlled over the whole area between World War I until the mid 1970's and after World War II. The U.S. and the former Soviet Union during the Cold war Era.

2. The economic importance of the region to the world first as the largest source of energy, second, the petrodollar investment in the west, third, the region as a large market for U.S. and western products mainly arms.
3. The Gulf as an extension, to the Arab-Israeli conflict and finally, the Gulf as part of the Muslim world.

As Nakhleah ,Emil has mentioned, the strategic importance of the Gulf to the U.S. interests are based on three primary considerations:

- The Gulf as a source of oil.
- The Gulf as an extension of the Indian Ocean.
- The Gulf as an extension of the traditional Middle East and the Arab-Israeli Conflict.¹³

U.S. Involvement in the Arabian Gulf

Introduction:

In a study made by Filip Stodrad (1981), Director of Center of the Middle-East Studies, stated that the Gulf has not been in a strategic value for the major powers between World War I and World War II until the discovery of the region oil. After World War II the strategic importance of the region because of its vast oil reserves, draw with it a new policy of protecting the region oil from any outside dominant power. This has been in the British agenda until the early 1970's. The British withdrawal from the region remakes the end of its influence in the region and the power vacuum starts to occur. Since then the U.S. direct involvement in the Gulf region began, 14 therefore this study will examine the U.S. involvement in the region by dividing it into four phases as follows.

4.4 million, Kuwait: 2.8 million, Oman: 2.7 million, Qatar: 0.9 million, Bahrain: 0.8 million, and Iran, Non-Arab state: 71.2 million.¹¹

The total population of the region is equivalent to 139.4 million people. The strategic importance of the region comes from the fact that whoever gains control over the area will have the ability to control the waterways and the shipping of the regions oil to the world. The area is bordered by Afghanistan in the east, the former Soviet Union in the north, the Red Sea in the west, and the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean in the south. The region is mostly deserting, with oil as the main natural resource. Indeed, it is because of oil that this region has gained its international significance. Of the eight countries only Iran and Iraq are potentially self sufficient in agriculture. However, the entire region suffers from limited water resources. Aside from Iraq and Iran, which have relative abundance of arable land and water resources and potentially self-supporting in agricultural products, the other states in the region posses mainly desert lands with an arid climate and a poor agricultural sector. These countries import practically all of their agricultural needs. Among the Arab countries Iraq before 1991 is at a comparatively advanced stage of industrial development particularly in terms of experience, trained manpower, long term planning and availability of resources and manpower, while the other states are in the initial stages of industrialization. Another social factor of significance in the Arabian Gulf is, in fact, religion. Although all Gulf States adhere to Islamic faith and although all of them, other than Iran, are ruled by Sunni Muslims, their perception of the role of Islam in the affairs of the state varies significantly from state to state. Saudi Arabia and Iran (Shiite) are ranked as the top of the scale of adherence to Islam as a guide to government. Secularism in this context is only a matter of degree, and in no way conveys the meaning associated with the term in the western political system.¹² However, the critical importance of this region to the world affairs in general, and to the U.S. in particular has been addressed in a report issued by the U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs (1975) under the title of "A New Perspective on The Persian Gulf" as follows:

1. Its strategic location which is so significant to the worlds major powers, specially the British who, by the

the historical method to review the development of the U.S. policy toward the Arabian Gulf from 1945 to 2003. The beginning of the U.S. involvement in the region started with the super power competition during the Cold War era until the 1991 Gulf War, the end of the Cold War order and the shift in the U.S. global strategy as a result of the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. In addition, the analytical method and the multiple factor analogy will also be used in this study to analyze the development of the U.S. policy during the period specified by this study. Finally the U.S. policy towards the Arabian Gulf cannot be adequately explained by focusing on a single factor in a certain period of time, rather a multiple source explanation will be more applicable in understanding U.S. foreign policy objectives. Although the causes of the U.S. policy towards the Gulf were different from one phase to another, this paper will discuss the different view point which will prove the multiple source of U.S. foreign policy⁹. However, this paper will first discuss the setting of the Arabian Gulf, second, the development of the U.S. policy in four different phases from 1945 to 2003 which will be addressed in this paper in order to give an overall review to the U.S. policy in the region, third, assessment of the U.S. policy in the Gulf will be analyzed, and finally finding and conclusion.

The Setting of the Arabian Gulf:

Although it is somehow impossible to isolate the Gulf from the rest of the Middle East Region, politically, economically, or strategically, the geo-political characteristics of the Gulf can be examined separately. The countries under discussion are of course, three relatively large ones (Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia) and five small ones (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman). Seven of the eight are Arab while the eighth (Iran), which is by far the largest, is a non-Arab state.¹⁰

Physically, the Gulf countries spread across an area of over 1.8 million square miles and include a population of over 67 million people in the Gulf Arab states, in addition to Iran, non-Arab states categorized as follows:

Iraq: 29 million, Saudi Arabia: 27.6 million, United Arab Emirates

War policy.¹ Some other scholars like Murray Gordon (1981), Robert G. Darius (1981),² Charles G. McDonald (1980), have discussed the U.S. containment policy towards the former Soviet Union, U.S. economic interests mainly oil, massive armament sales, especially to Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States investment in the U.S. have compelled the U.S. presidents through different stages to pursue the forward policy towards the Gulf region.³ The U.S. policy towards the Gulf has always been affected by events in and around the Gulf. Such events have been pointed out by a group of scholars like Pual Bradley (1982), Emile A. Nakleah (1982), Bruce R. Kuniho (1983), who have all argued that the Islamic revolution in Iran 1979, and the Soviet intervention of Afghanistan 1979, during the Carter Administration, have both led the U.S. to take a step forward in its policy towards the Gulf.⁴

Although, many scholars and foreign policy analysts have made great deal of analyses to explain how states act in their international environment. Among those a group of scholars especially realists, like Kenneth Waltz (1995) attempt to provide structural analysis of international and national politics and how the states act upon their national interest.⁵ Robert Gilpin (1981) argued that states interests changed with states economic and technological capabilities as key components of its power in which the states that have gained more power will seek to direct its foreign policy in favor of its national interests.⁶ Hans J. Morgenthau (1952), has argued that the national interests of the state can be and sometimes must be the base and the driving force by which the state policies and actions should be viewed.⁷ Donald E. Nuechterlein (1979) and others strongly believe that the national interests of the state is a very significant tool of understanding and analysing the states foreign policy and its response to crisis outside its borders.⁸

Despite all efforts that have been made by many scholars and analysts, and the many approaches of the study of international politics in general and the American foreign policy in particular, writers in this field are still facing difficulty determining which theory, approach, model, or framework of analysis can be used to provide a full and comprehensive view to the subject matters. Therefore this study will use

towards the Arabian Gulf from the end of World War II 1945 to the 2003 American occupation of Iraq. An attempt will be made to examine the competing explanations suggested by scholars as an effort to evaluate the objectives of the U.S. involvement in the Gulf.

Research Questions:

While it is an explanatory study, with regard to the purpose of study, the following research questions will be addressed.

- 1- What was the background of the U.S. policy in the region?
- 2- What were the primary factors that influenced and shaped the U.S. policy towards the region?
- 3- Was the U.S. policy conducted in a manner to pursue certain foreign policy objectives?

Importance of the Study

In addition to all efforts that have been made by scholars, and foreign policy analysts, this study will add an overall review of the U.S. policy towards the Arabian Gulf from 1945 to 2003. Although, many books and articles have been written in this area, and much has been made to assess the U.S. objectives in the region, including the traditional U.S. former containment policy, oil, market, arms sales, petrodollars investment, Israel and so on . Therefore the significance of this study would enrich the existing literatures on the topic. The data provided and analyzed in this study will be useful for students and academics who are interested in conducting a systematic analysis to future strategic and global perspectives of the U.S. policy in the region.

Research Methodology

While reviewing the U.S. Policy towards the Arabian Gulf, various policy makers and scholars have pointed out different explanations for the U.S. policy in the region. A group of scholars i.e, Zbigniew Brezinski and others (1983), have argued that the U.S. policy toward the Gulf aimed at attaining the balance of power with the former Soviet Union through the military preparedness within the general U.S. Cold

Introduction

The U.S. involvement in the Arabian Gulf has gone through different phases; from distant observer and containment to a direct involvement in the 1990-1991 Gulf War and now the American permanent presence in the region after the occupation of Iraq in 2003. Unlike the Western European power, the U.S. had no colonial experiences in the region. However, the Gulf prominence in the U.S. global strategy, U.S. awareness and concern regarding the region has significantly increased. In fact, the strategic location of the region which has been clearly noticed during both World Wars, the discovery of oil as a source of energy for the industrial states, its critical importance and linkage to the Arab Israeli conflict as it has been noticed in the past, particularly during the 1973 October War, the appearance of the former Soviet Union as the world super power beside the United States after World War II , and the beginning of the Cold War, the British withdrawal from the region in the early 1970's , the loss of Iran as the closest ally to the U.S. in 1979, the 1980 – 1988 Iran-Iraq War and its impact on the regions stability so that the U.S. interests , the 1990-1991 Gulf War and finally the Arab-Israeli issue, are significantly contributing factors to the critical importance of the region to the U.S.

The U.S. concern for the Gulf stability and the need for the region's oil have led to several major statements on the part of the U.S. presidents. Such statements or doctrines have been advanced with varying degrees of clarity and effectiveness. This study will provide an overall review to the development of the U.S. policy in the region in general and the assessment of the U.S. policy toward the Gulf in four different phases as follows: phase one started from 1945 to the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, phase two started from 1973 to the end of the 1988 Iran-Iraq War, phase three started from 1988 to the 1991 Gulf War and phase four from the 1991 Gulf War to the 2003 occupation of Iraq. An attempt will also be made to analyze the present and future objectives of the U.S policy toward the region.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the U.S. policy

تقييم السياسة الأمريكية تجاه منطقة الخليج

أحمد أبو سليم^(*)

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم السياسة الأمريكية تجاه منطقة الخليج العربي وذلك من خلال تحليل العوامل الدافعة للسياسة الأمريكية في المنطقة منذ بداية الحرب الباردة والتي تلت الحرب العالمية الثانية حتى الإحتلال الأمريكي للعراق 2003. ولقد عمدت الدراسة للتحقق من واقع أن السياسة الأمريكية في المنطقة كان يحكمها مجموعة من العوامل مع وجود درجة من التفاوت بين أهمية كل من هذه العوامل كأدوات دافعة للسياسة الأمريكية تجاه منطقة الخليج العربي والتي يمكن إجمالها بالعوامل الإستراتيجية، النفط كمصدر للطاقة، ثم احتواء النفوذ السوفييتي سابقا والعمل بكافة السبل المتاحة لإبعاد المنطقة من أي شكل من أشكال التهديد المباشر من دول الإقليم كالعراق سابقا وإيران حاليا وغير المباشر وذلك لأهمية المنطقة الإستراتيجية في معادلة توازن القوى ومن ثم إخضاع المنطقة للهيمنة الأمريكية والتي يمكن من خلالها تحقيق الأهداف الأمريكية في حقبة ما بعد الحرب الباردة والتي تتمثل في السعي الأمريكي للإعداد لنظام عالمي جديد يكفل للولايات المتحدة تحقيق الرغبة في الهيمنة على العالم .

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Assessment of the United States Policy Towards the Arabian Gulf.

1945-2003

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This study has exposed and analyzed the development of the United States policy towards the Arabian Gulf from the end of the Second World War 1945 until the 2003 American occupation of Iraq. It has unfolded the fact that in the past, the U.S. policy in the region was governed by a variety of factors with assorted degrees of intensity and significance. Strategic considerations and access to energy could be the basis of the U.S. policy in the Arabian Gulf. However, assessing the US policy toward the Gulf with a more explicit glance at a more specific level may reveal that the U.S. policy in the region over the preceding several decades, from the beginning of the Cold War 1945 until the 2003 American occupation of Iraq, were to keep the region under control so that U.S. interests would be served. The development of the U.S. policy in the region throughout different phases was carried out in this study, to further examine the basis of the US policy in the region.

